
Patterns of Translating English Compound Words into Hausa

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Abstract

Various definitions have been put forward by different researchers, scholars and translation practitioners in an attempt to capture the meaning and focus of translation. According to Nida (1974:19), "Translation consists of producing in the target language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, firstly with respect to meaning and secondly with respect to style". The main aim of this paper is to explore different patterns of translating English compound words into Hausa. The data were collected from dictionaries, books, theses and articles in journals as well as conferences. The model employed for the analysis is descriptive. This work identifies various formats for translating compound English words into Hausa.

Keywords: translation, compounds, source language, target language, Hausa

1. Introduction

Every language possesses compound words. These are basically two words joined together to form a new meaning. There are

scholars like Spencer (1991:309) who do not limit compounding to the combination of two words while there are others like Selkirk (1982) and Anderson (1985) who limit compounding to two elements. Prototypically, compounding is the concatenation of words to form other words. Motsch (1992) as cited in Asher (1994:521) states that “compounds are complex words which have words as constituents.” Lieber (1989) as cited in Asher 1994:3607 views a compound as “a new lexical item created by putting together two freestanding stems or words.” Many authors accept that compounds can be formed with a word and a stem (Bloomfield 1939, Selkirk 1982, Di Sciullo and Williams 1987, Spencer 1991). Booij (2002:141) asserts that the defining criterion for compounding is that in compounding, two lexemes are combined into a new lexeme.

Compound words are very frequently used in various languages and are often important words which determine the semantic content of the form or expression. These compound words are too large in number to be contained in a dictionary. Concerning the issue of translating compound words from English to Hausa, not much work was found. However, there are many scholars who have worked on translation in various languages to mention but a few: Tanaka and Matsuo (1999), Sarvi (2011 and 2013), Albarhamtoshy (1995), Amba (2011), Gonzalez and Scott-Tennent (2008), Maalej (1994) and Way (2009, 2012 and 2014). The paper is descriptive in nature and illustrates different patterns of English compound words translations into Hausa.

2.0 Translation

Translation is a process of interpreting linguistic texts or forms of particular language (i.e Source Language –SL) to express meaning in another language (i.e the Target Language – TL) with accuracy

and fidelity (Malmkjaer & Windle, 2011). There are various types of text translation from source to target languages. Newman (1981) mentions seven types of translation as stated below:

i) Word-for-word translation

This is often demonstrated as interlinear translation, with the target language (TL) immediately below the source language (SL) words. The source language (SL) word-order is preserved and the words translated separately by their most common meanings, out of context. Cultural words are translated literally. The main use of word-for-word translation is either to understand the mechanics of the source language or to construe a difficult text as a pre-translation process.

ii) Faithful translation

A faithful Translation attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the TL grammatical structures. It 'transfers' cultural words and preserves the degree of grammatical and lexical 'abnormality' (deviation from SL norms) in the translation. It attempts to be completely faithful to the intentions and the text-realization of the SL writer.

iii) Semantic translation

Semantic translation differs from 'faithful translation' only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value (that is, the beautiful and natural sounds of the SL text, compromising on 'meaning' where appropriate so that no assonance, word-play or repetition jars in the finished version.

iv) Adaptation

This is the 'freest' form of translation. It is used mainly for plays, comedies and poetry. The themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the SL culture converted to the TL culture and the text rewritten. The deplorable practice of having a play or poem literally translated and then rewritten by an established dramatist or poet has produced many poor adaptations, but other adaptations have free period plays.

v) Free translation

Free translation reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original. Usually it is a paraphrase much longer than the original, a so-called 'intralingual translation*', often prolix and pretentious, and not translation at all.

vi) Idiomatic translation

Idiomatic translation reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original- Authorities as diverse as Seteskovitch and Stuart Gilbert tend to this form of lively, 'natural' translation.

vii) Communicative translation

Communicative translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readers.

2.1 Translation procedures

Newmark (1988) describes translation procedures as operational. It begins with choosing a method of approach. Secondly, when we are translating, we translate with four levels more or less consciously in mind. A highlight of these levels is given below:

- i) The SL text level, the level of language, where we begin and which we continually (but not continuously) go back to;
- ii) The referential level, the level of objects and events, real or imaginary, which we progressively have to visualize and build up, and which is an essential part, first of the comprehension, then of the reproduction process.
- iii) The cohesive level, which is more general, and grammatical, which traces the train of thought, the feeling tone (positive or negative) and the various presuppositions of the SL text. This level encompasses both comprehension and reproduction: it presents an overall picture, to which we may have to adjust the language level;
- iv) The level of naturalness, of common language appropriate to the writer or the speaker in a certain situation. Again, this is a generalized level, which constitutes a band within which the translator works, unless he is translating an authoritative text, in which case he sees the level of naturalness as a point of reference to determine the deviation - if any - between the author's level he is pursuing and the natural level. This level of naturalness is concerned only with reproduction. Finally, there is the revision procedure, which may be concentrated or staggered according to the situation. This procedure constitutes at least half of the complete process.

3.0 Data presentation and analysis

The relevant data were collected from diverse literature such as English dictionaries, research articles, books, and newspapers. Some part of the data was obtained from radio and television programs, as well as verbal discussions with scholars on translation. This study, like other translation studies, is a secondary research because the English compound words have already been identified and described by earlier researchers such as Sarfó i,

(2011 and 2013) and Maalej (1994). The focus of this study is to translate English compound words into Hausa language according to various patterns.

3.1 Patterns of translating English compound words into Hausa

There are various patterns in translating English compound words into Hausa language as we noted earlier. They are discussed in the following subsections.

3.1.1 Pattern A

This pattern deals with words that are borrowed from source to target language. Borrowed compounds are usually remodeled to fit the phonological and morphological structure of the borrowing language in terms of translation. The loan compounds are translated into the received language which may have some similar sound. Some of the borrowed compounds adopted from a source language (English) and incorporated into a recipient language (Hausa) are translated as they are. Consider the following examples:

English compound	Literal Translation	Hausa
1) Handcuffs	hannu+ duka	Ankwa
2) Chewing gum	ci+ gam	Cingam
3) Handkerchief	hannu + k yalle	Hanciki
4) Headquarter	kai + kwata	Hedikwata
5) Pancake	kwano+ quli	Fanke
6) Loudspeaker	sauti+ magana	Lasifika
7) Torchlight	taɓ a + haske	Cocilan/Tocilan
8) Ice cream	k ank ara + mai	Askirim
9) Wheelbarrow	wili + hannu	walbaro
10) Pepper soup	tattasai+ miya	farfesu

In examples 1- 10, the English compound words are translated into Hausa language by means of remodeling and phonological adaptation. All the compound words in Hausa language column are borrowed from English and translated directly into Hausa. These kinds of compound words are seen as ‘Hausanized’ compound words. There is no other way of translating these kinds of compound words than this.

3.1.2 Pattern B

From a linguistic point of view, one could say that each language is full of gaps when compared with other languages. The translation technique involved in pattern B compounds is known as dynamic equivalence. Dynamic equivalence refers to structural adjustment that occurs in translating compound words from source to target language. It also shows how the initial words of the compound words are moved to the final position and the words in the final position move to the initial position. The Hausa compound words illustrated below (11-20) are left headed in contrast with what obtains in English where endocentric compounds are known to be right headed. Examples of compound words:

English Compound	Literal Translation	Hausa
11) Football	kafa + ƙ wallo	kwallon kafa
12) Notebook	rubutu + littafi	littafin rubutu
13) Tap-water	famfo + ruwa	ruwan famfo
14) Earthquake	ƙ asa + girgiza	girgizar ƙ asa
15) Bed-sheet	gado + zani	zanin gado
16) Handball	hannu + kwallu	ƙ wallon hannu

17) Pillor-jacket	filo + riga	rigar filo
18) School bag	makaranta + jaka	jakar makaranta
19) Hand bag	hannu + jaka	jakar hannu
20) Basketball	kwando + k wallo	k wallon Kwando

In examples (11-20), the free translation technique is applied in translating English compound words into Hausa and literal translation is not applicable in this pattern because the meaning will not be comprehensive. In this format the second words of each compound word are shifted from final position to initial position. Compound words structure in the source language (English) is still maintained but with a little addition of link element in target language (Hausa).

3.1.3 Pattern C

This is a separate pattern of translating English compound words into Hausa because the compound structure of the source language would not be maintained in target language. In this pattern, the compound words meaning change from compound structure meaning to single structure meaning. Therefore, translation of this nature is description based. See examples below:

English Compound	Literal translation	Hausa
21) Necklace	wuya + sawa	sarƙa ‘chain’
22) Newspaper	labari + takarda	jarida ‘newspaper’
23) Next-day	gaba + kwana	gobe ‘tomorrow’
24) Nightmare	dare + caji	mafarki ‘dream’
25) Manhood ‘penis’	namiji+k aho	azzakari/mazakuta
26) Bridegroom	amarya + ango	ango ‘bridegroom’
27) Courtship	babban daki + girjin ruwa	soyayya ‘love’
28) Boyfriend	yaro + aboki	saurayi ‘boyfriend’

29) Girlfriend	yarinya + aboki	budurwa ‘girlfriend’
30) Penknife	biro + wuqa	aska ‘barber knife’

As shown in examples (21) - (30), English compound words are first translated literally in order to have clear sketch then, the words are also joined and described. Finally, free translation is applied to describe compound words with a single meaning in the target language. For instance, in (21), the words *wuya* ‘neck’ and *sawa* ‘to put’ joined together, translate as *sark a* ‘chain’ and (22), the words *labari* ‘news’ and *takarda* ‘paper’ merged, to denote *jarida* ‘newspaper’. In (23), *gaba* ‘next’ and *kwana* ‘day’ are joined to signify *gobe* ‘tomorrow’, and in (24), *dare* ‘night’ *caji* ‘think’ resulted in *mafarki* ‘dream’. In example (25), *namiji* ‘male’ and *tushe* ‘origin’ indicate *azzakari* ‘penis’, and in (26), *amarya* ‘bride’ merges with *ango* ‘groom’ to translate as *ango* ‘bridegroom’. In (27), *babban d’aki* ‘hall’ and *girjin ruwa* ‘ship’ translates to *soyayya* ‘love’, and in (28), *yaro* ‘boy’ and *aboki* ‘friend’ denote *saurayi* ‘boyfriend’. In 29, *yarinya* ‘girl’ and *aboki* ‘friend’ arrive at the meaning *budurwa* girlfriend’ and in (30), *biro* ‘pen’ and *wuqa* ‘knife’ denote *aska* ‘barber knife’.

3.1.4 Pattern D

In this category, translation of source text could be based on the cultural system of the receptor language. The techniques utilized in this format are ‘sense for sense’ or ‘free translation’ which is the only technique that could be used to deal with the interpretation of the source language texts into the target language. This happens irrespective of the formal correspondence. There also exists, a means of replacing every individual word of the source text (ST) with its closest cultural equivalent in the target text (TT). The following examples are illustrative:

English Compound	Literal Translation	Hausa
31) Bathroom	wankaa d'aakì	bân-d'aakì 'back of room'
32) Bedroom	gadoo d'aakì	d'aakìn kwaanaa 'the room of sleep'
33) Bedtime	gadoo lookàcii	lookàcin barcii/ kwana 'time for sleep'
35) Rainbow	ruwaa bàkaa	bàkan gizò 'the bow for spider'
36) Joll of rice	dàfàa-duka	dafa-duka 'cook all'
37) Face cap	fuskanta hula	hànà-sallà 'type of cap'

Regarding the idea of the cultural disparity among languages, we can see how the compound word in (31) *bathroom* is translated in the target as *bayan d'aki*, later turned to *ban-d'aki* after the morphological process known as clipping in the second syllable of the word *bayan*. In the culture of source language (English) there is a room provided for taking bath which is in total contradiction to the culture of the target language. In the target language culture, people took bath at the back of their room not inside the rooms (self-contained). This shows that there is no lexical term for taking bath in the target language culture. It is also the same issue as in the translation of *bedroom* and *bedtime*.

Thus, no lexical provision is specifically made for bed or time for bed in the culture of the target language. The term *bedroom* is translated as *d'akin kwana /barci* 'room for sleeping' and *bedtime* translated as *lokacin barci* 'time for sleeping' and even the words *rain bow* and *joll of rice* share the same format of translation. Finally, *face- cap* translates as *hana-salla* in the target language. In Hausa culture, cap has an important role play more

especially in social and religious performance. All the caps using by Hausas have no extension but this kind of cap called *face-cap* ‘*hana-salla*’ has extension which can prevent a person to prostrate accurately during prayer.

4.0 Conclusion

This study entitled ‘patterns of translating English compound words into Hausa language’ has discussed the different processes or ways by which English compound words are translated into Hausa. The study also discovered a number of translation patterns but focused only on four of these patterns for the purpose of this study. Firstly, this paper identified the compound words borrowed from English and translated into Hausa language. Secondly, it examined some English compounds with structural adjustment when translated in Hausa. Thirdly, this paper analyzed how the compound words of a source language change from compound meaning to single meaning in the target language. Finally, the issue of the closest cultural equivalent in the translation of English compound into Hausa was also described.

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